Democratic Engagement Plan

2018 - 2019

Executive Summary

The Democratic Engagement Plan for East Carolina University (ECU) was written and developed by Tara Kermiet, Associate Director in the Center for Leadership and Civic Engagement (CLCE) and Alex Dennis, Assistant Director in CLCE. The goals were developed using data from the 2012 and 2016 National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE) reports and from assessment results from previous democratic and voter engagement programming offered by our center. The goals and implementation strategies were discussed with members of the Democratic Engagement Coalition (see Overview & Leadership section) before being solidified in this plan. The plan was then reviewed by the Director of CLCE and the Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Involvement & Leadership before being submitted.

This plan will guide the work that will be implemented at ECU by CLCE and other campus departments and units beginning summer 2018. When creating this plan, we wanted to focus on increasing the voting rate of our students by institutionalizing voter registration on campus in a variety of ways. We were very intentional with regard to the student demographic groups that we would like to target and for which to create additional programming due to their previous low voter turnout. We hope to accomplish our short- and long-term goals related to these issues, across both East and West campuses. This plan was developed in order to coordinate our efforts on campus and to ensure that we are using best practices and intentionality regarding our goals and strategies. The strategies outlined below for our short-term goals will be implemented immediately and throughout the next couple of years, while the strategies and initiatives outlined in our long-term goals will drive our work over the next six years. We expect to revisit this plan each summer to assess the current state of our efforts and to modify our goals accordingly.

Overview & Leadership

The primary responsibility of democratic engagement falls under the responsibilities of the Center for Leadership and Civic Engagement (CLCE) within Student Involvement and Leadership (SIL) at East Carolina University (ECU). The Director, Associate Director, and Assistant Director for CLCE supervise and advise democratic engagement efforts across campus. The Assistant Director supervises two Andrew Goodman Foundation (AGF) Vote Everywhere Ambassadors, one Campus Vote Project (CVP) Democracy Fellow, and one Service and Leadership Assistant (SLA) for Democratic Engagement.

Director, CLCE (staff)	Dr. Dennis McCunney
Associate Director, CLCE (staff)	Tara Kermiet
Assistant Director, CLCE (staff)	Alex Dennis
AGF Vote Everywhere Ambassadors (students)	Haley Creef Meghan Edwards
CVP Democracy Fellow (student)	Chris Ballance
SLA, Democratic Engagement (student)	Colin Johnson

While CLCE is not solely responsible for hosting, promoting or implementing democratic engagement initiatives, this is the only entity on campus where democratic engagement is included within the mission and vision of the center. Other entities on campus working with legislative officials or promoting democratic engagement include ECU's Director of Strategic Initiatives, Political Science Department, and Student Government Association.

Additionally, CLCE will establish the Democratic Engagement Coalition, building upon the work of the inaugural Voter Engagement Coalition which was organized for the 2016 general election. The purpose of the Democratic Engagement Coalition is to bring together faculty, staff, students and community members who are passionate about democratic and voter engagement work and to help advise and give direction for the work that needs to be done on our campus and within our community. The Democratic Engagement Coalition will be tasked with developing new partnerships, brainstorming new programming, and covering all aspects of voter and democratic engagement work. We envision the Democratic Engagement Coalition meeting 3-4 times per year.

Assistant Director, CLCE	Alex Dennis (Chair)
Professor, School of Communication	Dr. John Howard
Associate Professor and Chair, Political Science Department	Dr. Alethia Cook
Executive Assistant, Central Reservations Office	Teresa Baro
Director of Strategic Initiatives	Michelle Brooks
Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs	Dr. Erik Kneubuehl
Deputy Director, Pitt County Board of Elections	Tony McQueen
Public Safety Supervisor, ECU Police Department	Stephanie Carnevale
Greenville-Pitt County Chamber of Commerce	Taylor Duck

Board of Directors

Associate Director/SGA Advisor	Hank Bowen
AGF Vote Everywhere Ambassadors	Haley Creef
	Meghan Edwards
CVP Democracy Fellow	Chris Ballance

Commitment

ECU's mission is to be a national model for student success, public service and regional transformation. As demonstrated by our motto, *Servire*, service is at the heart of the university. ECU is committed to inspiring our students to be engaged citizens and be a national model for developing the leadership of faculty, staff, and students through engaged research and service.

The fundamental purpose served in requiring students to take general education courses at ECU is to have students develop an understanding of aspects of the human condition that are not the primary focus of their major field of study. General education exposes students to the broad range of human knowledge, while enabling them to acquire key skills and to gain critical competencies that prepare them to understand societal problems and seek solutions. On that foundation, students then build expertise in one or more academic areas, developing the capacities to establish themselves in the work world and to contribute to society as engaged and well-informed citizens. This foundation and its integration with specialized learning in the students' majors enable them to live broadly informed, responsible, and meaningful lives; at the same time, this preparation is essential to good citizenship in an increasingly global and culturally diverse world.

The CLCE reports to the Division of Student Affairs at ECU. The Division of Student Affairs provides programs and services that optimize student learning and leadership, builds a safe supportive and welcoming campus community, fosters the emotional growth and personal development of students, and makes a positive contribution to the overall student experience. Directly tied to the strategic plan, by 2022 the Division of Student Affairs plans to fully develop and embed civic learning and democratic engagement on campus through a framework of programming and action that includes understanding of democratic values, capacities to engage diverse perspectives and people, and commitment to collective civic problem solving. Related to this strategic plan objective are the following unit actions:

1. Promote student civic learning and democratic action through focused engagement in 1) intergroup and deliberative dialogue, 2) service-learning, and 3) collective civic problem solving projects.
2. Enhance the Division's influence in the field of student affairs by supporting the development of staff to be leaders in student affairs and their respective functional areas with specific focus on addressing common problems, empowering people to act, strengthen communities, and generate new knowledge.

The mission of the CLCE is to provide opportunities for the campus community to learn, serve and lead with our community as active citizens and advocates for positive social change. Service, leadership and democratic engagement commitments range from one-time events to weekly, semester-long opportunities to intensive immersion experiences. All opportunities are designed with an educational focus to support students as they learn about themselves and their community, take action through leadership and civic engagement, and advocate for lasting positive social change.

Landscape

ECU participates in the National Study of Learning, Voting, and Engagement (NSLVE). NSLVE began in 2013 and now provides federal voting rates for more than 1,000 colleges and universities and over 9 million students. NSLVE is a signature initiative for the Institute for Democracy & Higher Education (IDHE) at Tufts University's Jonathan M. Tisch College of Civic Life. The mission of IDHE is to shift college and university priorities and culture to advance political learning, agency and equity.

The voter registration and voting rates in our report reflect the percentage of our students who were eligible to vote and who actually voted in the 2012 and 2016 elections. These results are based on enrollment records ECU submitted to the National Student Clearinghouse and publicly available voting files collected by Catalist. Institutional voting rates are also adjusted based on data submitted to the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). Race and ethnicity data was not submitted by ECU, therefore our NSLVE report does not include that information.

The 2016 ECU report includes our numbers from the 2012 election, which provides us with a basis of comparison.   According to the report, we saw an increase in our total student enrollment, total number of eligible voters, number of students registered, and the number of students who voted. The voting rate of registered students increased by 1.4%, which is on pace with other institutions in the study. While the number of students who voted increased in the 2016 election, our overall voting rate remained constant at 46.2% and our voter registration rate dropped slightly from 71.9% to 70.2%. This slight dip could be attributed to the irregularity of the 2016 election, which was very negative and divisive. New voters, especially millennials, do not respond well to such negativity and divisiveness, which may have caused some to not participate at all in the election process.

One-stop voting (commonly known as "early voting") allows any registered voter to cast an absentee ballot in person on select days prior to Election Day and has been an important initiative in North Carolina for several years. The number of our students who voted "early" increased by 3.6% between the 2012 and 2016 election. Early voting was definitely the most popular method of voting for our students, accounting for 58.9% of total votes. Absentee ballots were down by 3%, which could indicate that more of our students are now registered in Pitt County and voting early. This increase is also a good indicator that our initiative to encourage students to vote early is in fact working and our need for a polling place on our main campus is critical.

When accounting for age, our vote totals increased for every age group except one; 18-21 year old student voting rate dropped by 2.4% compared to the 2012 election. Age groups of 22-24 saw an increase of 2.9%, 25-29 saw an increase of 4.3%, 30-39 saw an increase of 3.4%, 40-49 saw an increase of 2.3% and 50+ saw an increase of 3.4%. Overall, young adults between the ages of 18 and 21 have the lowest voter turnout of any other age group, which will be a target group for our work for the 2018 midterm elections and beyond.

When accounting for gender, our vote totals dropped for men and women but there was definitely a larger drop for women than men. The voting rate for women decreased by 10.2% and for men it decreased by 6.5%. This is very interesting because one would assume that having a female presidential candidate on the ballot would increase female interest and participation but clearly the results show this did not occur at ECU. Female students will be a target group for our work for the 2018 midterm elections.

The NSLVE report breaks down student voting data by student's field of study, which showed that Library Science majors voted at the highest rates (75.8%), followed by History (57.1%), English (55.7%), and Education (51.8%). The STEM majors (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) had the lowest voting rates, all less than 50%. This corresponds with national trends, therefore STEM majors will be a target group for our work as well.

ECU is currently prioritizing the work of democratic and voter engagement efforts on campus and has the support of upper administration and national partners such as the Andrew Goodman Foundation (AGF), the Campus Vote Project (CVP) and the Students Learn Students Vote Coalition (SLSV). Internal barriers for student voting include a current lack of institutionalized voter registration, the need for a centralized location for information related to voting and the means to disseminate this information to the student body. External barriers for student voting include the lack of a polling location on campus that is easily accessible by students, confusion surrounding voter ID laws, and the current climate of divisiveness and distrust of democratic institutions. Internal and external barriers, along with the data gleaned from our NSLVE reports helped shaped our goals and strategies outlined below.

Goals

Short-Term

1. Solidify an on-campus one-stop early voting location in the new student center for the 2020 election.
2. Increase the voting rate to 50% between 2016-2020 for presidential elections.
3. Increase the voting rate of students ages 18-21 to 40% between 2016-2020 for presidential elections.
4. Conduct eight voter registration drives per semester, equally distributed across East and West campus.

5. Advocate for the inclusion of election dates and deadlines on the university calendar by 2020.
6. Develop a Democratic Engagement Coalition, comprised of faculty, staff, students and community members, to advise and institutionalize democratic engagement efforts on campus.
7. Collaborate with Student Activities & Organizations and Greek Life to facilitate at least one voter engagement workshop per year.
8. Expand election shuttles to include one-stop early voting, in addition to Election Day.

Long-Term
1. Increase the student voting rate by 10 percentage points between 2016-2024 for both presidential and midterm election years.
2. Add at least one civic education/democratic engagement learning outcome to the COAD 1000 curriculum by 2022.
3. Institutionalize voter registration on campus by adding voter registration information into Pirate Port.
4. Expand programming for STEM majors, females, African-Americans, Asian-Americans, and Hispanic students.
5. Graduate 160 "Citizens" from Citizen U by 2022.
6. Facilitate two faculty development workshops per year focused on incorporating civic learning and democratic engagement into their curriculum.
7. Establish a liaison model for democratic engagement outreach to departments and divisions on campus.
8. Lobby for the inclusion of race and ethnicity data to the National Student Clearinghouse so that ECU's NSLVE report reflects these demographics by 2022.

Strategy

Short-Term Goal 1: Solidify an on-campus one-stop early voting location in the new student center for the 2020 election.
- Continue to attend Pitt County Board of Election (BOE) meetings.
- Provide BOE with the blueprints and necessary information required to ensure the new student center meets the criteria for a polling location.
- Use NSLVE data and other means of assessment to provide a clear rationale for why it is important to have a polling location on main campus.
- Coordinate with Parking and Transportation Services to ensure parking for voters and the logistics for required drive-thru voting.

Short-Term Goal 2: Increase the voting rate to 50% between 2016-2020 for presidential elections.
Short-Term Goal 3: Increase the voting rate of students ages 18-21 to 40% between 2016-2020 for presidential elections.
- Coordinate with campus partners to institutionalize voter registration.
- Hold a minimum of eight voter registration drives per semester

- Provide transportation to and from polling locations on election days and during One-Stop Early Voting
- Educate students on issues related to voting via workshops and presentations.
- Continue to lobby the Pitt County Board of Elections for a polling location in our new student center which is expected to open in November of 2018.

Short-Term Goal 4: Conduct eight voter registration drives per semester, equally distributed across East and West Campus.
- Work with the Central Reservations Office and the Democratic Engagement Team to brainstorm best locations and times with high student traffic.
- Create voter registration tabling kits and ensure that team members and volunteers are properly trained regarding NC voter laws and basic customer service skills.
- Work with Student Affairs marketing to create a comprehensive marketing strategy to reach more students and to increase tabling productivity.

Short-Term Goal 5: Advocate for the inclusion of election dates and deadlines on the university calendar by 2020.
- Compile list of dates related to voter registration deadlines, primaries, One-Stop Early Voting window and the election day.
- Research the university calendars of other institutions and formulate a rationale for why it is important to include such dates on university calendars.
- Coordinate with the university calendar committee, student affairs administration and the faculty senate to ensure implementation.

Short-Term Goal 6: Develop a Democratic Engagement Coalition, comprised of faculty, staff, students and community members, to advise and institutionalize democratic engagement efforts on campus.
- Develop a mission, vision, and goals for the coalition.
- Write a job description or list of expectations for members.
- Brainstorm a list of possible members, schedule first meeting and extend invites.

Short-Term Goal 7: Collaborate with Student Activities & Organizations (SAO) and Greek Life to facilitate at least one voter engagement workshop per year.
- Develop the workshop materials and presentation.
- Coordinate with SAO and Greek Life to plan logistics and implementation.

Short-Term Goal 8: Expand election shuttles to include one-stop early voting, in addition to Election Day.
- Research and pursue grant opportunities to offset the cost associated with election shuttles.
- Work with the Pitt County Board of Elections and ECU Transit to develop efficient routes/schedule for Election Day shuttles.
- Develop a schedule and coordinate drivers for a One-Stop Early Voting shuttle, utilizing the CLCE van to assist students in getting to/from the Willis Building (currently the closest One-Stop Early Voting location).

- Create a marketing plan to advertise the election shuttles to the student body.

Long-Term Goal 1: Increase the student voting rate by 10 percentage points between 2016-2024 for both presidential and midterm election years.
- See strategies for Short Term Goal 1 (above)

Long-Term Goal 2: Add at least one civic education/democratic engagement learning outcome to the COAD 1000 curriculum by 2022.
- Research first-year seminar curricula of peer institutions to gain a better understanding of what should be included with regard to civic education and democratic engagement.
- Meet with the First Year Programs office, COAD 1000 instructors and the university curriculum committee to advocate for this addition and to understand the process for revising the curriculum.
- Develop the learning outcomes and write the chapter that will be added to the COAD 1000 textbook.

Long-Term Goal 3: Institutionalize voter registration on campus by adding voter registration information into Pirate Port.
- Research how other NC colleges and universities share voter registration information with students and what information is shared.
- Meet with the Pitt County Board of Elections, the Registrar's Office and Information Technology and Computing Services to decide on what information should be included on Pirate Port and how it can be technically implemented.
- Develop the materials or module and timeline for implementation, with assistance of Student Affairs leadership (if needed).

Long-Term Goal 4: Expand programming for STEM majors, females, African-Americans, Asian-Americans, and Hispanic students.
- Update existing programs such as Race in Our Space (RIOS) and Politics in Our Space (PIOS) to include curriculum and issues that are important to these groups of students.
- Create an outreach presentation that can be used to educate faculty about the importance of including civic education in their class curriculum.
- Organize focus groups comprised of students from these target populations to develop new strategies for encouraging their peers to become engaged in our democratic process.
- Utilize OrgSync to contact student organizations (from the target populations) and offer to attend their next meeting to share voter registration and democratic engagement information with their members.
- Partner with campus units such as Greek Life and Intercultural Affairs to market and implement new programming.

Long Term Goal 5: Graduate 160 "Citizens" from Citizen U by 2022.
- Increase marketing and/or outreach on campus so that the program becomes more visible.

- Review assessment data in order to update curriculum so that the program stays relevant and interesting.
- Explore ways to incentivize completion of the program.
- Explore future sponsorship opportunities to enhance the program budget.
- Offer a travel opportunity to Washington, DC bi-annually for Citizen U alumni or a possible Alternative Break Experience (ABE) that includes civic and democratic engagement opportunities.

Long Term Goal 6: Facilitate two faculty development workshops per year focused on incorporating civic learning and democratic engagement into their curriculum.
- Develop the workshop curriculum (outcomes/objectives) in consultation with the Students Learn Students Vote Coalition (SLSV), NC Campus Compact, Department of Political Science, Office for Faculty Excellence and the Democratic Engagement Coalition.
- Work with Student Affairs marketing to create a marketing strategy to effectively promote the workshop to faculty.
- Enlist the support and assistance of the university curriculum committee and the Office of Faculty Excellence to create a comprehensive list of courses that include democratic engagement themes.
- Explore ways to incentivize the inclusion of civic learning and democratic engagement in the classroom, such as mini-grants to faculty from CLCE.

Long Term Goal 7: Establish a liaison model for democratic engagement outreach to departments and divisions on campus.
- Develop list of departments and divisions on campus that should be assigned a Democratic Engagement liaison.
- Create a guide for the liaison model (expectations, goals, etc.) with the assistance of the Democratic Engagement Coalition.
- Create the structure for the liaison model, assign members of the DE Team and train them on their role as liaisons.

Long Term Goal 8: Lobby for the inclusion of race and ethnicity data to the National Student Clearinghouse so that ECU's NSLVE report reflects these demographics by 2022.
- Contact universities and colleges that include this data and inquire as to how having this data has impacted their NSLVE reports and democratic engagement plans.
- Develop a rationale for why race and ethnicity should be included in the NSLVE report for ECU and how this information could be utilized to improve our institution's voting rate.
- Meet with Student Affairs administration, Student Affairs Assessment and the Registrar's Office to share our rationale and develop a timeline for the inclusion of race and ethnicity data to the National Clearinghouse and NSLVE reports.

These efforts will require collaboration with the following campus departments and units: First Year Programs office, the Division of Student Affairs, CLCE Democratic Engagement Team and the Democratic Engagement Coalition, Information Technology & Computer Services (ITCS), the

Registrar's Office, Campus Living and Dining, and the Department of Political Science. In addition we will need to work closely with the Pitt County Board of Elections and our national partners, the Andrew Goodman Foundation and the Campus Vote Project.

Reporting

This plan will be shared with the CLCE staff, members of the Democratic Engagement Coalition, posted on the website of the CLCE, and incorporated into reports to upper administration, including the Student Affairs Leadership Team and Student Affairs Executive Council. Additionally, we intend to share highlights from this plan with key stakeholders through presentations. We will also share the NSLVE report on the CLCE website. Where applicable, we will share updates and information through social media channels and official university news outlets.

This plan will be shared as needed with external organizations such as the ALL IN Challenge, Campus Vote Project, Andrew Goodman Foundation, Students Learn Students Vote Coalition, and Campus Compact.

Evaluation

Evaluation will be critical in knowing if our democratic engagement efforts are effective in increasing student participation in the areas of voter registration, education, and participation. It will also aid us in knowing whether or not we are achieving our short-term and long-term goals. Additionally, we would like the evaluation to give us information that will help us continue to improve student democratic engagement, build stronger coordination for democratic engagement efforts, and to better advocate for institutionalizing democratic engagement work on our campus.

The CLCE will lead the evaluation process, building on the foundation that has already been set. We will continue to track attendance at events/programs, assess outcomes using event/program evaluations, and work with NSLVE and our local board of elections to obtain data for comparison to previous years. We intend to gather information throughout the process, and make adjustments to programming and outreach based on the data. We will also do an overall evaluation with all data following the 2018 elections to assess our success in meeting the goals we have set out in this plan. We will share the information gathered through key stakeholders, members of the Democratic Engagement Coalition, reports to upper administration, and social media and university news outlets as appropriate.

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Questions about this plan should be addressed to:

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